

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1 – 2. (Canceled):

3. (Withdrawn) A lockup control valve, the lockup control valve being controlled by a signal pressure of a lockup solenoid to provide an engagement pressure to a lockup clutch for direct coupling between an engine and an automatic transmission, the lockup control valve comprising:

a spool, the spool being put in a fully biased position by a force greater than a maximum value of the signal pressure.

4. (Currently Amended) A system for controlling a hydraulic pressure of an automatic transmission, comprising:

a torque converter comprising a lockup clutch, the lockup clutch carrying out direct coupling between an engine and the transmission;

a lockup solenoid valve—~~which~~ that provides a signal pressure for controlling engagement of the lockup clutch;

a lockup control valve—~~which~~ that provides an engagement pressure to the lockup clutch in accordance with the signal pressure, the lockup control valve comprising a spool; and

a control unit—~~which~~ that controls the lockup solenoid valve, the control unit being programmed to control the signal pressure to hold the engagement of the lockup clutch with the spool of the lockup control valve being stationary in an axially movable position ~~before the fully biased position~~ between two fully biased positions.

5 – 6. (Canceled):

7. (Currently Amended) An automatic transmission, comprising:

a torque converter comprising a lockup clutch, the lockup clutch carrying out direct coupling between an engine and the transmission;

a lockup solenoid valve—~~which~~ that provides a signal pressure for controlling engagement of the lockup clutch;

a lockup control valve—~~which~~ that provides an engagement pressure to the lockup clutch in accordance with the signal ~~pressure and comprises~~ pressure, the lockup control valve comprising a spool; and

a control unit—~~which~~ that controls the lockup solenoid valve, the control unit being programmed to control the signal pressure to hold the engagement of the lockup clutch with the spool of the lockup control valve being stationary in an axially movable position ~~before the fully biased position~~ between two fully biased positions.

8 – 9. (Canceled):

10. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling a hydraulic pressure of an automatic transmission, the transmission comprising:

a torque converter comprising a lockup clutch, the lockup clutch carrying out direct coupling between an engine and the transmission;

a lockup solenoid valve—~~which~~ that provides a signal pressure for controlling engagement of the lockup clutch; and

a lockup control valve—~~which~~ that provides an engagement pressure to the lockup clutch in accordance with the signal pressure, the lockup control valve comprising a spool,

the method comprising the step of:

controlling the signal pressure to hold the engagement of the lockup clutch with the spool of the lockup control valve being stationary in an axially movable position ~~before the fully biased position~~ between two fully biased positions.